REMARKS

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 3-9. A typographical error has been corrected in claim 3. As should be apparent, the word "analyzer" should have been "processor" and the correction has now been made.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Matsubayashi et al. Matsubayashi describes a system for performing document searching. Matsubayashi uses calculations to divide up a character string to extract smaller strings for searching. The frequency of occurrence of the extracted strings in documents in the databases is used in conducting the search to identify relevant documents.

Applicant's invention, on the other hand, as set forth in claim 1 is used for segmenting compound words in order to produce a segmented string that is interpretable as a compound word. Applicant does not find this in Matsubayashi. Furthermore, claim 1 has been amended to further specify that the step of identifying includes locating a component in a lexicon. Applicant does not find within Matsubayashi the operation of locating components in a lexicon in order to identify the linkable components for producing a segmented string interpretable as a compound word. For these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 1 and claim 2 depending therefrom is patentable over Matsubayashi.

Claim 1 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Iizuka. Iizuka discloses a system for segmenting agglutinative text into words. The segmentation process of Iizuka appears to rely entirely upon calculations employing joint probabilities. To the extent that Iizuka discloses the use of a word dictionary, the method described therein is fully distinguished from Applicant's invention. As set forth with respect to Figs. 15 or 21 of Iizuka, the dictionary is used to produce a plurality of division patterns for a character string. The joint probability calculating section is used to select from the among the dictionary identified patterns to select correct division patterns from the candidates. To the contrary, in accordance with Applicant's invention a probabilistic breakpoint analysis is used to construct a set of probabilistic breakpoints in the natural-language input. It is only once the probabilistic breakpoints have been constructed that the lexicon comes into play for identifying linkable components. Applicant takes

advantage of the probabilistic breakpoint analysis to make efficient use of the lexicon in identifying linkable components. Iizuka fails to disclose "identifying a plurality of linkable components by traversal of substrings of the natural-language input delimited by the set of probabilistic breakpoints, wherein a linkable component is identified by locating the component in a lexicon." Iizuka shows the use of a dictionary independent from the use of probability calculations. For these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over Iizuka.

Claim 10 has been added to more completely claim Applicant's invention. In accordance with claim 1, the linkable components are identified by traversing substrings delimited by the set of probabilistic breakpoints. In accordance with claim 10, the method more particularly traverses the substrings in an order determined by the probabilities. Neither Matsubayashi nor Iizuka discloses traversing substrings delimited by probabilistic breakpoints to identify linkable components in a lexicon. More particularly, the cited art fails to disclose conducting such a traversal in an order determined by the probabilities. For this additional reason, claim 10 should be allowed.

For all the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance and early notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert M. Asher
Reg. No. 30,445
Bromberg & Sunstein LLP
125 Summer Street, 11th Floor
Boston, MA 02110-1618
(617) 443-9292
Attorney for Applicant

02639/00A36 483252.1